

Message Text

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SUBJ: EL PAIS COMMENTS ON THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE BA-MFM

REF: STATE 21494

1. IN A FEBRUARY 4 EDITORIAL ENTITLED "THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE BUENOS AIRES MEETING, "EL PAIS SAYS THAT THE REASON BEHIND THE POSTPONEMENT WAS VERY STRANGE: "THE REUNION WAS SUSPENDED BECAUSE THERE ARE DIVERGENCIES IN THE AMERICAN FAMILY, WHICH MEANSTHAT THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THESE DIVERGENCIES WAS AVOIDED... WE (EL PAIS) NEVER BELIEVED THAT THE NEW DIALOGUE WAS WORTHWHILE, BUT SINCE THE BUENOS AIRES REUNION WAS THE NEAREST SCHEDULED MEETING, WITHOUT DOUBT IT WOULD HAVE PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO FULLY DISCUSS THOSE ASPECTS OF THE TRADE LAW THAT ARE BOTHERSOME AND TO CLARIFY OR PROTEST ITS COMPLEXITIES, MAKING USE OF A BALANCED APPROACH."

2. THE EDITORIAL SUGGESTS THAT THE REAL REASON FOR THE POSTPONEMENT WAS THAT THE GOA WISHED TO AVOID THE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS PROMISE TO INVITE CUBA.

3. EL PAIS CONTINUES: "THE ONLY COMPENSATION FOR THE POSTPONEMENT IS KNOWING THAT THE OAS--THE OLD, OFTEN-MALIGNED OAS--HAS AN ASSEMBLY IN APRIL AND THEN THE THEME OF FOREIGN COMMERCIAL POLICY
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WILL BE PUT ON THE TABLE. AND IN THE OAS THERE WILL BE NO POSTPONE-

MENTS AND NO COUNTERPRODUCTIVE PRESENCES, THE AUTHORITY OF THE MEETING WILL NOT BE SUBJECT TO QUESTION, AND NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO CLAIM THAT HE IS NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE IMPORTANT ISSUES."

4. "THE GOU CONTINUES TO EXHIBIT ITS SENSIBLE AND MATURE JUDGMENT IN THE MIDST OF THE GIBBERISH THAT SURROUNDS THIS ISSUE....IT IS SURPRISING THAT A POSITION SO WELL-JUSTIFIED AND SO MUCH IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES HAS BEEN TERMED A DEMONSTRATION OF EXCESSIVE COMPLIANCE WITH WASHINGTON'S POINT OF VIEW. WE SEE NOTHING OF THAT IN OUR POSITION. ALTHOUGH THE SECRETARY OF STATE APPEARED TO BE UNHAPPY ABOUT THE POSTPONEMENT, IT IS EASY TO SEE THAT WASHINGTON MUST HAVE BEEN EAGER TO PUT OFF OR AVOID DISCUSSION OF THE CONTROVERSIAL TRADE LAW."

5. "WE RETURN TO THE NECESSITY TO FACE UP TO THE FULL IMPORT AND THE DIVERSE IMPLICATIONS OF THE TRADE LAW. IN ORDER TO PREVENT INSUFFICIENT PREPARATION, THE FRAGMENTATION OF LATIN AMERICA, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ABSTRUSE DISCUSSIONS THAT WOULD ACCOMPLISH NOTHING, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT A CECLA MEETING PRIOR TO THE OAS ASSEMBLY WOULD BE THE BEST MEANS OF ARRIVING AT A WELL-PREPARED, COHERENT POSITION WHICH WOULD REFLECT OUR DESIRES. IN THIS WAY THE DISCUSSION OF THE THEME IN THE OAS ASSEMBLY COULD DO A GREAT SERVICE FOR THE CAUSE OF BETTER INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS." SIRACUSA

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